

Conversation with 13 year old male, Virginia (Transcription)

START M35 A(1)

can you tell me anything that you remember about Viet Nam?

S: In Viet Nam , (<unintelligible text>) I go to school. And my parents, my mom, she work different and my dad work different.

F: What does your mom do in Viet Nam? What did she do?

B: She went to sell fish. Dry fish.

F: And your dad?

S: My dad, he drive a truck, like a taxi.

F: A taxi, ok. Where did you used to live in Viet Nam?

S: Near (N) Tao.

F: And what do you remember doing everyday, beside going to school in Viet Nam?

Library of Congress

S: At night we go outside in the street and like we play.

F: You play? What do you do for fun?

S: SOmetime we play tag, hide and seek or jumping rope. Or we play um badminton.

F:..What is the most fun, do you think?

B: Tag.

F: Tag? Tell me, you know, suppose I don't know how to play tag. What do you do in a game of tag?

S: Well, one person is it, and he try to tag you, and if he tag you, you're it.

F: I see. Do you do this often.

S: Yeah.

Subject #4---Page 2 #052

F: What about school, how is school in Viet Nam?

S: I don't remember that much.

Library of Congress

F: You don't remember that much, Ok; Anything else you can tell me about life in Viet Nam that you can remember?

S: It's fun. And like, and like, you know the street more, and you know other family, like a neighborhood.

F: Do you have alot of friends in Viet Nam?

S: Yeah.

F: Tell me about them, any friend that you remember.

S: Well, this friend, like, he likes to play flip card, and he like to have the chicken fight.

F: Do you like chicken fight also?

S: Yeah. I like to watch them fight. Like the two chicken fight.

B: How do you get achicken to fight?

S: I don't really know. I mean, I only watch the thing. I think they put some wine in them or sometime they put them like like those crawd, I don't know what it's called.

F: How often do they have chicken fight?

Library of Congress

S: I don't know... I think they have it around noon.

F: Around noon every day?

S: Not ev-, I don't know. I think so. Not exactly every day, though.

F: Who owns the chicken?

S: My brother, my bigger brother. His friend, like, my brother, like he collect chicken to fight as a hobby.

F: How many chickens does he have?

S: I don't know.

F: OK, so how old were you when you left Viet Nam?

S: I was about seven or eight.

F: What do you remember about leaving Viet Nam? What happened?

Subject # 4---Page 3 #091

F: I mean, like what happened in the beginning, and when did your family decide to leave and all that.

Library of Congress

S: WELL, it was almost, I think it was almost the end of the, like the communists was really near. And we left but my dad stay back. So he came to the America in two years later.

F: And how did you leave, how did you and your family leave?

S: Well first we took a, like we were on a boat. And we sailed out, and the ship, the American big ship, they came and pick us. And we was gonna, we tried to get up there but we couldn't, so we were stranded in the mid-ocean, for about, I don't know how long but then later the ship, not really a big ship but it's kinds a boat, and picked us pick us up, then they like they led us to a raft, a real big raft and later the American ship pick us up.

F: And where did you go after that?

S: Well, we sail about a week I think, to Guam. It's an island.

F: And what did you do at Guam?

S: We don't have to do anything much. We get free, like lunch, food, we get three meals a day, and we can, we usually go swimming.

F: How long did you stay there?

S: I don't know.

F: And after Guam, where didyou go?

Library of Congress

S: We went to Pennsylvania.

F: Did you fly there? Of did you go by boat or what?

S: We went, we fly there.

F: So, you went to Pennsylvania, what happened the first few weeks, wehn you first same here, do you remember anything. Was it difficult?

s: Yeah, because, like when we left, it's, it's a fort its an army fort and the building, made of all the same, so when I first came here, first I wanted to follow my sister, but I got lost.

Subject #4---Page 4 #137

F: Tell me about it. You got lost, what happened? Is it scary?

S: Yeah, it was scary. Like, there's uh police I mean, MP. They keep driving me around, <but?> they ask me "is this building the fight one?" And we keep going out and in to check, cause I, all the building kinda look the same, so I didn't know which one.

F: So, how long were you lost?

S: I don't remember.

Library of Congress

F: But how long did they drive you around before you find the right place.

S: I don't know, I mean About an hour.

F: So you know what happened after that? How do you keep from getting lost again?

S: I don't know. I guess I just walk in the daylight. And I can remember. And I can ask the people around there.

F: How long did you stay in this place in Pennsylvania?

S: I don't know, about a year I guess, or less than

F: Less than a year, ok, And then after that what happened?

S: Then, then we were like the sponsor. They, they selected us and we took a bus. and We drove to to Virginia.

F: Who sponsored you?

S: I don't know their names.

F: So, then you came to Virginia about a year after you left Viet Nam, right?

No, I think it took after two year.

Library of Congress

F: What did you first do in Virginia, when you first got here, what happened?

S: Like they have very good neighborhood. Like the Lots of people like came in. Like then come, like talk to us, and make friends, like that.

F: And can you speak English then when you came here?

S: No. I can't speak English at back then. I don't know how to speak it back then.

F: When you come to Virginia, you still don't know?

S: No, I just know a little bit. Like hello, how are you

F: I see. When do you really start speaking English?

Subject #4---Page 5 #185

S: About a year later.

F: A year later, and what year were that?

S: I don't know.

Library of Congress

F: Do you remember what grade you were in?

S: I think it was about second.

F: Second grade. I see, you start speaking English when you were in second grade. When you were in Pennsylvania, did you go to school?

S: Yeah.

F: What grade?

S: They didn't tell us tha grade, they just teachers, I mean, teach us. And we sing a lot.

F: What kind of thing did they teach you to sing?

S: Like row, row your boat, and like all of the song, like when it's Halloween, we sing like songs in Halloween, when it's Christmas. But we didn't stay there until Christmas.

F: You wanna sing something?

S: No.

F: Do you remember the date when you got to Virginia, around?

S: No.

Library of Congress

F: But you know that you were in second grade, right?

S: Yeah.

F: OK, you start speaking English when you were in second grade or when or third grade

S: Second or later. Cause when I came here I think I was first, then they moved me up to second grade. Because they saw they(?) like later they know that I was old, that's why they move me to second grade.

F: OK. So ok so you get move up to second grade, and then like Do you have to go to special class or anything?

S: Yeah.

F: Tell me about it.

Subject #4---Page 6 #223

S: Like, they choose all the Vietnamese people that just came, and some of my old friends, I got like that and they just came too just like me. And like they teach us English.

F: How was it different than a regular class?

Library of Congress

S: The ESOL was easier. Like they only teach us, about, like one subject at a time.

F: One subject at a time.

S: They only teach us English only.

F: Do you go to English class the whole day?

S: No.

F: What do you do other than that?

S: Like we uh we only, like go into a special class for about an hour. And the rest of the day we do just like any other student. But like the teacher, don't, like we don't have to do it we just have to try, like that's all.

S: What class do you like the most then, at that time?

S: The special class.

F: Does the teacher happen to know how to speak Vietnamese?

S: No.

F: What do you do in the special class besides studying English? that you like?

Library of Congress

S: We learn like verse, like all the, like riddles, like Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Mary had a lamb, like that.

F: So you like that stuff?

S: Yeah.

F: Then when do you stop going to special class?

S: It was about two years ago.

F: What grade were that then?

S: It was about Fifth grade.

F: Fifth grade and you don't have to go to special glass any more? And when do they start holding you responsible for all the classes? You know, giving you grades and all?

Subject #4---Page 7 #267

S: Since fifth grade.

F: Before that you don't really have to, they don't give you grades?

Library of Congress

S: No, they do give me grade, except that like they don't count me like regular students.

F: Why? What do you mean?

S: Like, if I supposed to get a D, they give me a C, cause I don't understand that much.

F: Do you think you understand as well as the American do, noW?

S: I guess so.

F: SO, now they just give you regular grades, right? Like everybody else right?

S: Yeah.

F: Now, what kind of subject do you like the most now?

S: Well, I like math and American study.

F: Let's talk about American study. What kinds of things do you do in American study?

S: We study American history, like when and how the United State was form. And the discovery of American and the Civil War

F: I think that would be an interesting subject. Let's see, what were the most recent thing that you study in American study?

Library of Congress

S: The beginning. Like when Christopher Columbus discover American.

F: OK. Can you tell me a little bit about it?

S: Well, he was the first one to, like, well, he wasn't really the first one to live here, but like he was far away he was the first one to discover American.

F: OK, who were here before him.

S: The Indians.

F: What else. Then what happened after he discovered America?

S: Well, in England they start sending people to American, and they live there and like the Indian help them.

Subject #4---Page 8 #318

F: What did they do to help them? to help the American?

S: Well, like they teach them how to grow corn and catch fish, and other stuff. They teach them things that they needed to survive in the new world. Likethe cold and like built shelter and other stuff.

Library of Congress

F: OK. Then what did the American do, after... awhile The American, Then Indian taught the American how to survive, did the American teach the Indian anything?

S: I don't know. Cause I didn't, they didn't say very much. They trade, like gun, like later, very later, they trade with guns, and like the things that Indian likes, like fabric, silk, and other stuff.

END M35 A(1)